



# TRANSATLANTIC MAIL STUDY GROUP

OF THE

British North America Philatelic Society

Newsletter No. 49

Jack Arnell

November 1995

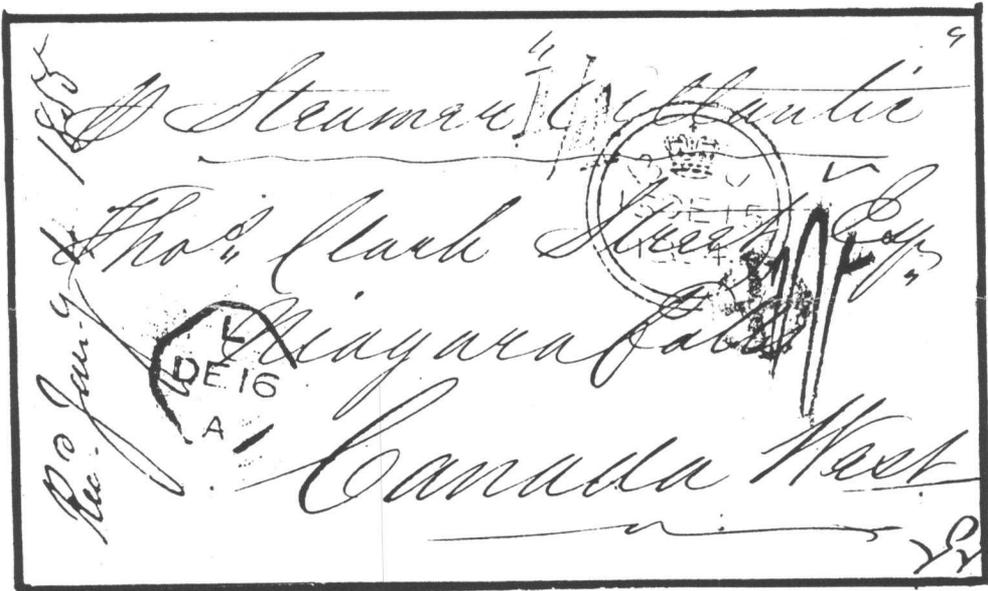
## BNAPLEX 95 (Concluded)

As indicated in the last newsletter, I was left with four pages of my Edmonton exhibit to reproduce in this one.

**First Crimean War Collins Line Sailing.** The British Government's need for troopships and materiel transports during the Crimean War led to the commandeering of a number of Cunard steamers in late 1854. As its least and best ships were on the Liverpool-New York run, this service was the one to suffer, as the company was forced to suspend it throughout 1855. At the time, the Collins Line with a U.S. mail contract was operating a competitive service and, in an agreement with Cunard, handled the British Mails through New York during this year, changing its sailing dates to correspond with the current Cunard schedule.

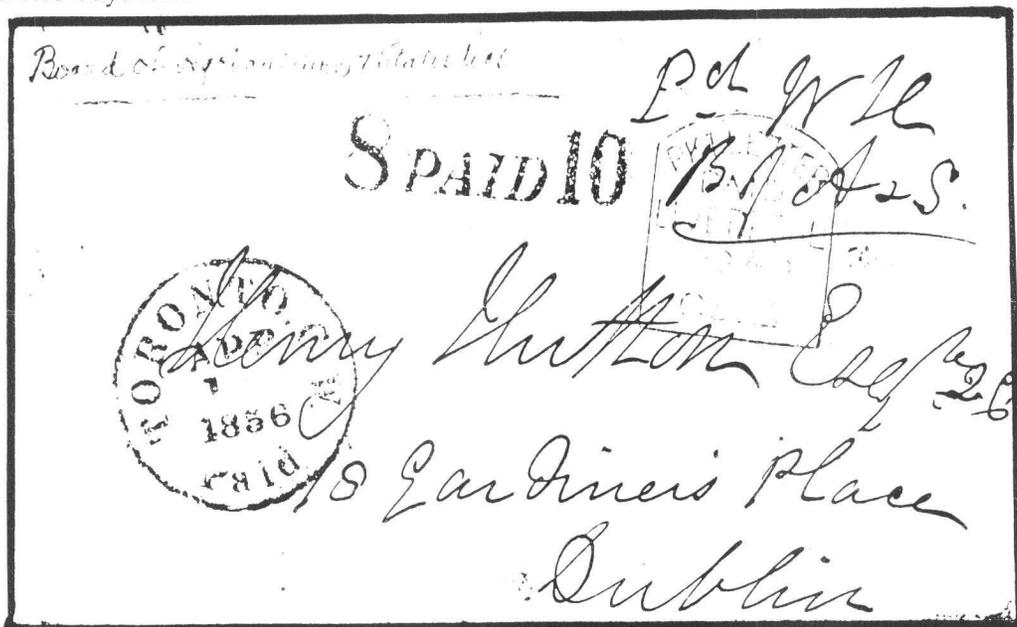
When the *Arabia* was commandeered after her arrival at Liverpool on 26 November 1854, the *Collins Atlantic* delayed her departure from there from Wednesday, 13 December to Saturday, 16 December to begin this arrangement. This 15 December unpaid letter from London was sent in the Inland Mail to Liverpool, instead of being put in a B.N.A. closed bag at London, as shown by the red encircled cross. At Liverpool, it was dated with a packet office lozenge the following day, struck with '1/-' to show the British debit, and put in the B.N.A. Mail.

The *Atlantic* was forced to put back with a broken rudder, delaying its crossing until 18 December, and arrived at New York on 31 December. The letter was struck with '1/4' to show the packet and colonial postage of 1s. 4d. Cy. It was backstamped at Chippawa on 3 January 1855.

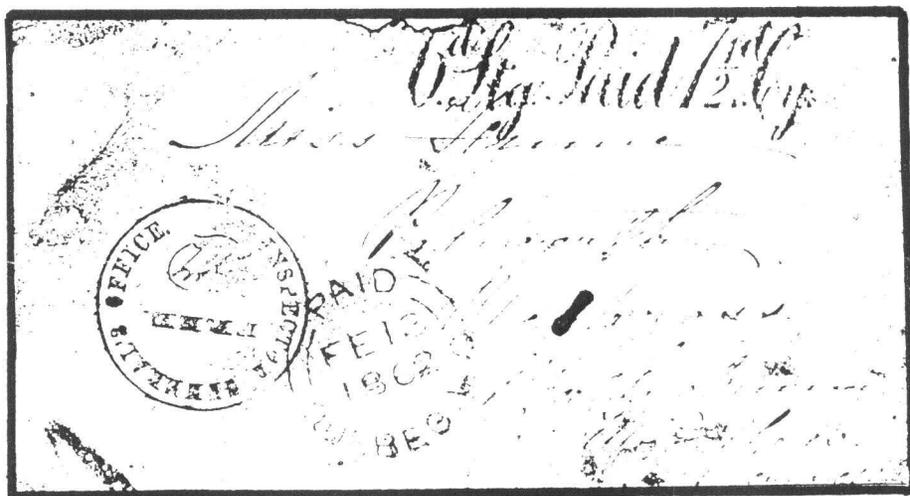


This postage rate has been called the Crimean War rate and letters carrying it are often sold at a large premium. While B.N.A. letters of this period carried by U.S. steam packets are scarce compared to those by Cunard, the rate was established by the 1848 UK-US Postal Convention from February 1849 and continued until January 1868.

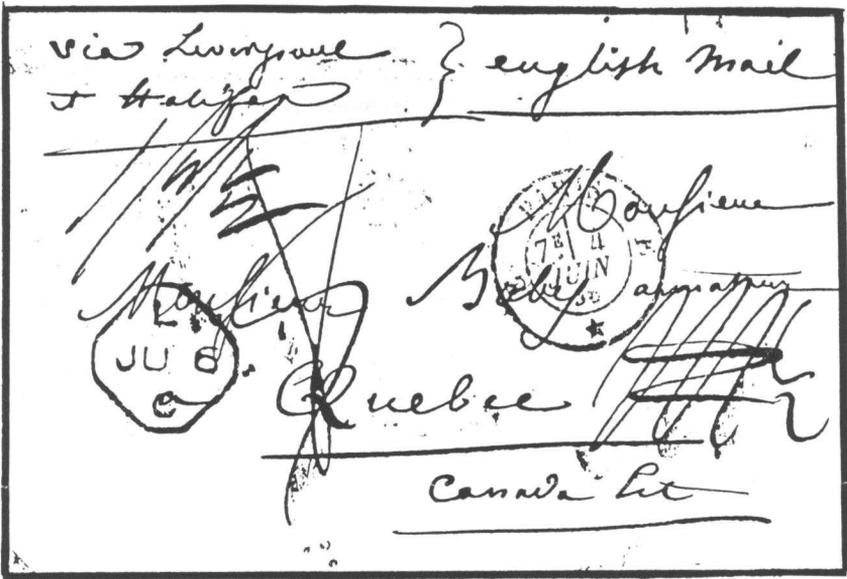
**Official Letters.** Properly franked letters from government offices and authorized individuals were carried free. Below are two examples from B.N.A. government offices. The first was from the Board of Agriculture & Statistics, Toronto and was marked at upper right in red: 'Pd .W H/ B of A & S'. It was datestamped 'PAID' at Toronto on 14 April 1856 and struck with '8 PAID 10', both in red. Carried by the *Asia* from New York on 16 April and arrived at Liverpool on 28 April, where it was datestamped with a 'PKT. LETTER/PAID' tombstone, and backstamped at Dublin two days later.



The second was from the Inspector General's Office, Quebec and with his 'FREE' handstamp and authorizing initials therein. Datestamped 'PAID' at Quebec on 13 February 1862 and struck with '6<sup>d</sup> Stg. Paid 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub><sup>d</sup>. Cy.'. Carried by the *Allan Nova Scotian* from Portland, Me. on 15 February and arrived at Londonderry on 28 February.



**Unpaid British and Canadian Packet Letters.** Two letters from Paris mailed on 4 June and 2 October 1856 with the postage unpaid. The first was marked: 'via Liverpool & Halifax/english Mail' and has a manuscript '10' on the back, showing a French debit corresponding to 5 décimes or 5<sup>d</sup>. Stg. It was backstamped at London, dated with a Liverpool packet office lozenge on 6 June and put in a closed bag for Quebec. Carried by the *America* from Liverpool on 7 June to Halifax on 18 June. Backstamped at Quebec on 21 June and rated 1s. 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub><sup>d</sup>. Cy. (1s. 0<sup>d</sup>. Stg.)—correct for a letter from Great Britain. This was subsequently changed to 1s. 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub><sup>d</sup>. Cy. (1s. 5<sup>d</sup>. Stg.)—the correct B.N.A.-French rate.

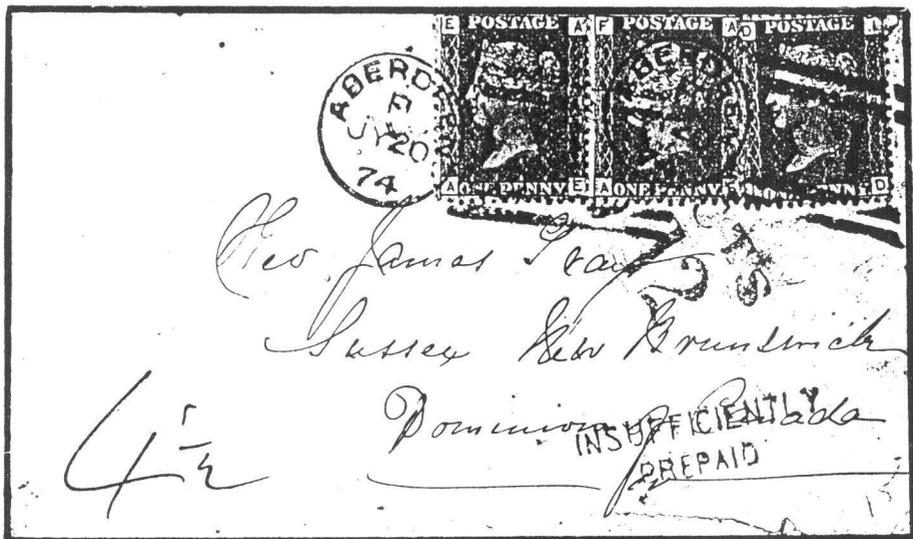


Similarly, the second letter was backstamped at London on 4 October, dated with a packet office lozenge on 7 October and put in the Quebec bag. Carried by the *Allan North American* from Liverpool the following day and arrived at Quebec on 22 October, where the same rating error as above was made.



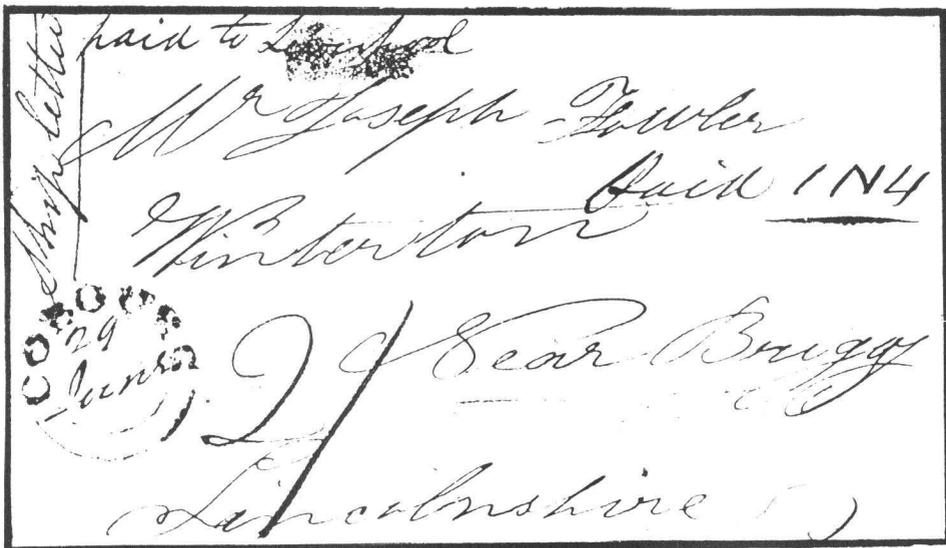
**Insufficiently Prepaid Packet Letter with Fine.** Letter mailed at Aberdeen on 20 July 1874 with three 1d. adhesives as the Late Fee on a letter mailed at the main post office between 7:15 and 7:30 p.m. As the postage could not be paid at the time of mailing, it was struck with: 'INSUFFICIENTLY PREPAID' and '4 1/2' written at lower left to show the British debit of 3d. Stg. postage and half the 3d. fine. Carried by the *Allan Sarmatian* from Londonderry on 24 July in a closed bag for Halifax. Landed on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River for transfer to the Intercolonial Railway to Halifax on 2 August. Backstamped at Halifax on 9 August and struck

with 'CTS 12' to show the postage due of 6 cents postage and 6 cents fine. Backstamped at Sussex, N.B. the next day.



AN UNUSUAL OUTGOING QUEBEC SHIP LETTER

I have had a partial cover from the Ferriage period, which was mailed at Cobourg, U.C. on 29 June 1832 with 1s. 4d. Cy. postage prepaid and 2s. 0d. Stg. collect. For a long time, I could not decide how to interpret the charges and finally wrote it up as a problem, assuming that it had gone through New York, like most letters from Upper Canada during that period. I gave a slide talk on Ferriage at the annual meeting of the British Postal History Society at the beginning of October this year. While assembling this, I again worried about this cover and finally reached an entirely different conclusion as to its routing, which I offer here. The cover is shown below.



My earlier conclusion that it had gone through New York stemmed in part from the 'paid to Liverpool' at upper right, indicating an American sailing packet. However, the prepaid postage was insufficient to get it to New York, with 3d. Cy. ferriage via Kingston. It dawned on me that the prepaid postage was sufficient to carry it to Quebec City to go by private trader down the St. Lawrence, hence the 'paid to Liverpool' or other British port.

On arrival in Britain, it was marked 'Ship Letter' in manuscript and rated 2s. 0d. Stg. postage due, representing 8d. ship letter fee + 1s. 4d. inland postage. This high inland postage precludes Liverpool as the port of arrival, coupled with the fact that Liverpool used ship letter handstamps.

Such postage to Brigg would only apply to the extreme western part of Cornwall or northern Scotland—a very small port without a ship letter handstamp at this late date. By way of an example, the postage from Penzance in Cornwall to Brigg was 1s. 2d. Stg. Also on the cover is an inverted boxed 'Brigg/Penny Post', showing the local delivery charge.

The early sailing vessels were subject to the vagaries of the weather as the variety of ship letter strikes found on those from New York bound for London, from Land's End to Gravesend. Cargoes from Quebec were often destined for Glasgow and a storm could have easily carried a vessel to the northern parts of Scotland.

**TO AND FROM UPPER CANADA VIA HALIFAX**

Malcolm Montgomery sent along two interesting covers sent through Halifax to take advantage of the lower packet postage of 1s. 0d. Stg., even though in the early 1850s this was a slower route. The first was marked 'England by Halifax' and was mailed at Queenston, U.C. with the postage prepaid, as shown by 'PAID' and the elaborate manuscript '1/0 Stg 1/1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> CY'. It was backstamped with a Halifax transit mark. The *Europa* carried it from Halifax on 12 December and arrived at Liverpool on 21 December. There are no British postal markings.

*M*  
*Mr Kenneth Macpherson*  
*Merchant*  
*Edwardburgh*  
*Canada West*  
*British America*  
*Via Liverpool*  
*to Halifax*

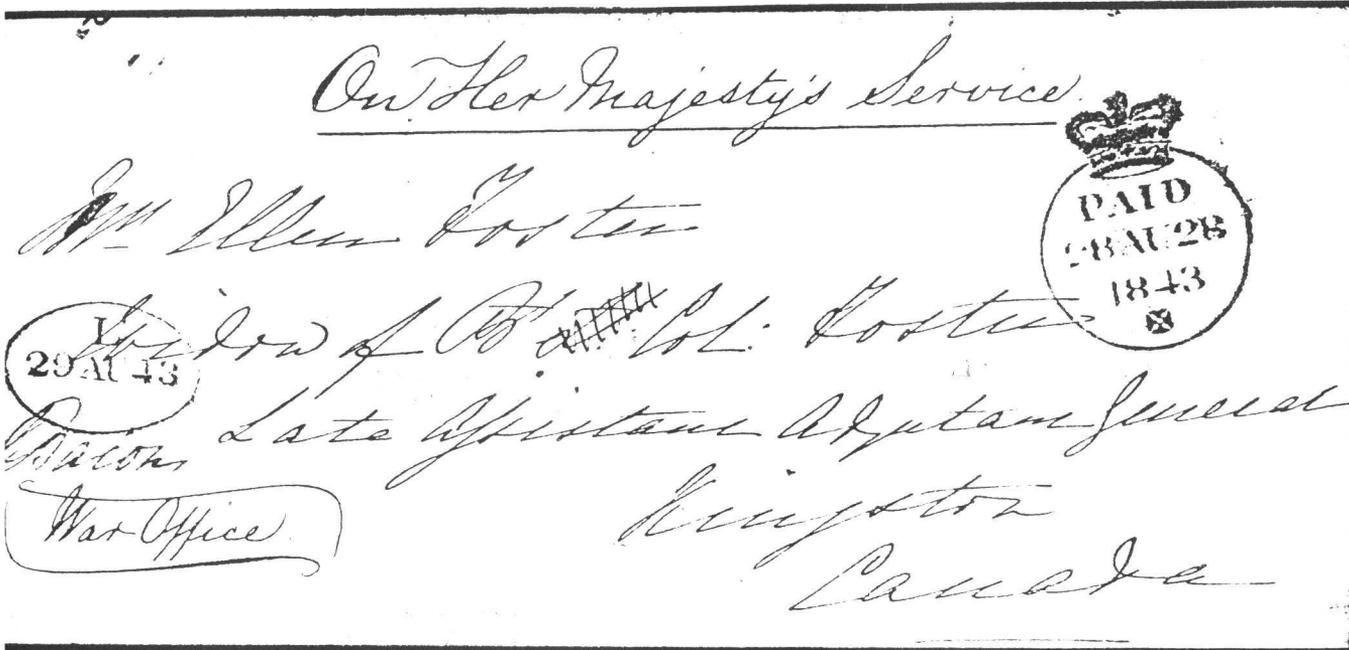
*PAID* England by Halifax  
*1/0 Stg 1/1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> CY*  
*Mrs G. Williams*  
*Wroxton*  
*Barnbury*  
*Oxford*  
  
*PAID*

The second letter (shown on the previous page) was from Dingwall, Scotland dated 16 June 1851 and marked 'Via Liverpool et Halifax'. It was mailed with the packet postage unpaid and consequently marked with a manuscript '10' in *black* to show the British debit. It was carried by the *Canada* from Liverpool on 28 June and arrived at Halifax on 7 July, where it was rated 1s. 1 1/2 Cy. postage due. Malcolm noted that it took a further thirteen days to reach Montreal.

### AN OFFICIAL WAR OFFICE LETTER

An official letter from the War Office, London to a Kingston, U.C. widow comes from Allen Steinhart. It was marked 'On Her Majesty's Service' and franked by 'Bacon/War Office' to authorize its Free transit. Mailed on 28 August 1843, it was datestamped at the Liverpool packet office oval on the following day, put in a closed bag for Upper Canada; it was carried by the *Caledonia* from Liverpool on 5 September and arrived at Halifax on 18 September, whence the closed bag was taken to Kingston.

It should be noted that someone corrected the late officer's rank by crossing out the 'Lt' and so upgrading him to the rank of colonel.



### CHANGE AT THE TOP OF THE STUDY GROUP

I have been thinking for some time that after over nine years of single-handedly running the Transatlantic Mail Study Group, it was time to let some one else carry on. One of my supporters, since he joined the group a few years ago, has been Malcolm Montgomery in Southampton, England. Malcolm has a deep interest in early B.N.A. transatlantic mail, has his own equipment and access to much more, so he was my first choice. Fortunately, the idea appealed to him and, although he has recently become busier than ever, after retiring from the British Army, he has accepted the challenge.

I had intended to carry on until No. 50, which would have meant producing the first issue of 1996. However, I got together with Malcolm at the Postal History Conference at Steeple Aston, near Oxford in October and we decided to make the change after this issue, so that he will start his regime with the January 1996 issue. I am sure that the Study Group will benefit from the changeover, for he will undoubtedly draw on a broader selection of material, as his interests are quite different from mine, although both relate directly to the pre-U.P.U. period of transatlantic mail.

I shall be sending him whatever I have by way of unused contributions—almost all from Allan Steinhart, but if any of the members has a cover which might be of interest to others, send a photostat and brief description, if possible to Malcolm at:

Malcolm B. Montgomery MBE  
76, Glen Eyre Road,  
Bassett, Southampton  
SO2 3NL  
England.

INDEX FOR NOS. 44 – 49

The index for Nos. 1 – 24 appeared in No. 24, for Nos. 25 – 31 (1992) in No. 31, and for Nos. 32-37 (1993) in No. 38, for Nos. 38-43 (1994) in No. 43, with another year having passed, this is the index for 1995.

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## CHAIRMAN/EDITOR'S FAREWELL

I have enjoyed getting the Study Group underway and creating of volume of newsletters, which I hope will be useful as reference material for the future. Copies are filed with them Canadian National Archives and the American Philatelic Research Library for those who may want to make use of them. They have been indexed have been indexed along the way (Nos. 1-24 at No. 24 - 5; Nos. 25-31 at No. 31 - 7; Nos. 32-37 at No. 38 - 7; Nos. 38-43 at No. 43 - 7; and Nos. 44-49 at page 7 herein). I shall continue my writing , so you will still find my name somewhere. So farewell as your chairman and editor.

*My Best Wishes To All The Readers Of This Newsletter  
and  
May You All Have A Happy Yearend Holiday and Successful 1996*

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Hamilton HMFx  
Bermuda

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